

2013 Gold Medal Tribute



Prabhakar Tripuraneni, MD, FASTRO

Tribute by Christopher M. Rose, MD, FASTRO

It is a great pleasure to introduce Prabhakar Tripuraneni, MD, FASTRO, one of this year's Gold Medal recipients. I first met Prabhakar 29 years ago. Prabhakar's life is an example of how a focused individual can use hard work and a love of the ideals of the United States to contribute to our collective well-being. He received his medical training in Andhra Pradesh, India, at the Guntur Medical College. After a radiation oncology residency at the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton, Alberta, he came to the United States and received a fellowship with Theodore L. Phillips, MD, FASTRO, at the University of California, San Francisco. According to the late Steven A. Leibel, MD, FASTRO, Prabhakar was the hardest working trainee he had ever seen. Following the fellowship, he spent a year at the University of Wisconsin Medical School in Madison, WI, before moving to the Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, CA, where he has spent his three-decade career.

Prabhakar's contributions to radiation oncology stem from his service to ASTRO and his insights into the pathogenesis of in-stent restenosis. Using an animal model for restenosis, Paul S. Tierstein, MD, Vincent Massullo, MD, Shirish K. Jani, PhD, and Prabhakar developed the methodology, dosimetry, and dose prescription for endovascular brachytherapy (VBT). Cardiology centers of excellence continue to use VBT for the treatment of in-stent stenosis after failure of drug-eluting stents, for the prevention of stent restenosis of peripheral vascular disease, and for renal dialysis shunt stenosis.

Prabhakar is responsible for many critical innovations at ASTRO, including:

- Acquisition of the URL/creation of the ASTRO website, www.astro.org.
- Development of the DVD format for the ASTRO Annual Meeting that became the Virtual Meeting.
- Organization of the first IGRT meeting that morphed into the current State of the Art Techniques Symposium.
- Organization of and chaired the first *e*Contouring sessions with Phillip M. Devlin, MD.
- Organization of and chaired the SCOPE II Conference and institutionalized the idea with K. Kian Ang, MD, PhD, FASTRO, of a Radiation Oncology Inter-Society meeting.
- Initiation of the ASTRO Fellows designation and the Fellows Selection Committee with J. Frank Wilson, MD, FASTRO.
- Organization of the IHE-RO organization with Jatinder R. Palta, PhD, FASTRO.
- Reorganization of and chairs the new ASTRO practice accreditation program with James A. Hayman, MD.

Prabhakar is a terminal "geek," interested in all things technical. He is the chief medical officer of ViewRay Inc. and has brought to market an innovative hybrid large bore MRI/3-headed cobalt/MLC device for IMRT or 3-D conformal treatment delivery with continuous, real-time IGRT tracking. He also works to improve the quality of radiation

oncology in India through the Association of Radiation Oncologists of India (AROI) and the emerging private sector health care delivery system.

Prabhakar is unfailingly polite, loyal, kind, faithful, and funny. He is the dutiful and loving husband to Sujatha, a concerned and doting father to Sravanthi and Sangeetha, son-in-law Krishna, and grandfather to Rohit. Prabhakar has taught me to accept what one cannot change, but to be impatient to make a difference where one can. He lives what he calls the “seven Fs”: faith, family, friends, fidelity, fire in the belly to make us do what we do, freely giving of oneself for the good of others, and fun. I wrote this about Prabhakar for the 2006 ASTRO Annual Meeting:

The genius of our country is that it is a magnet for amazing individuals who want to recapitulate the prior experiences of peoples from far off lands who have contributed to the American success story. We are lucky and blessed to be led by such men and women of vision and energy.

We do honor to our professional Society and ourselves by recognizing Prabhakar Tripuraneni’s contributions as an outstanding ASTRO Gold Medalist.